



NOAA FY 2001 Budget Request Fact Sheet

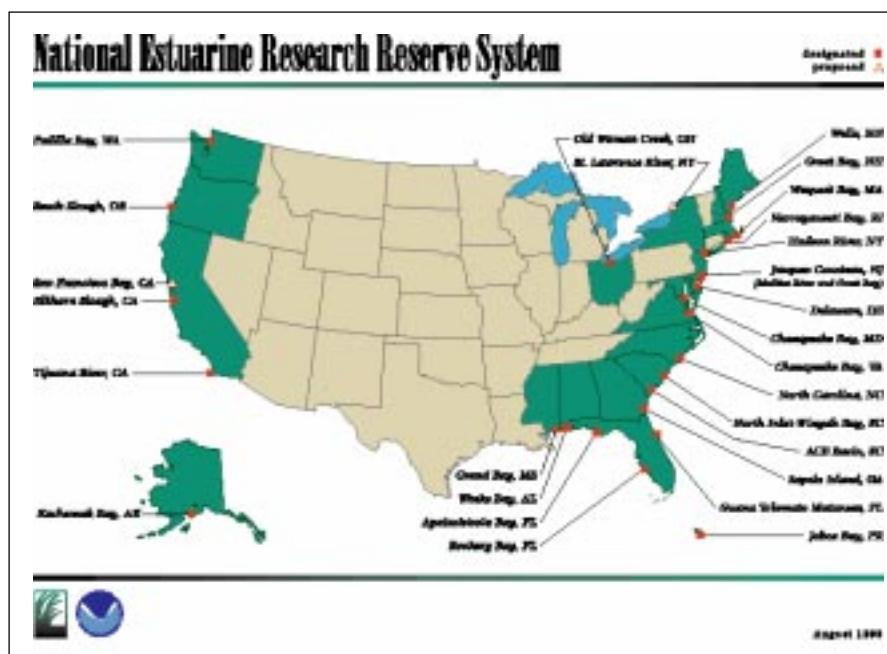
LANDS LEGACY INITIATIVE

OUR SEAS AND OUR SKIES



National Estuarine Research Reserve System - \$8.0 Million Increase

NOAA requests \$20 million in FY 2001, an increase of \$8.0 million to enhance the protection and management of the rich resources in the more than one million acres of the existing 25 reserves and the two reserves to be designated in 2001 that constitute the National Estuarine Research Reserve System. This initiative will strengthen reserve management capabilities and enhance research, education, and resource stewardship in surrounding communities. Increased funds (2.0 million of the total) will also allow states and communities to acquire lands in and around reserves and construct important facilities for education and research. NOAA's National Estuarine Research Reserve System request is a key component of the Administration's FY 2001 Lands Legacy Initiative, and complements other Lands Legacy investments seeking to help protect and restore our valuable ocean and coastal resources.



Map of the National Estuarine Research Reserve System.

NOAA Budget: Lands Legacy (New Funding Request)

	FY 2001 Change \$ millions
National Ocean Service	
Ocean Resource Conservation and Assessment (Coral Reef Conservation)	\$4.0
Ocean and Coastal Management (Coastal Zone Management Act Program)	\$94.8
(Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control)	\$2.0
(National Estuarine Research Reserve System)	\$6.0
(National Marine Sanctuaries)	\$10.0
National Marine Fisheries Service	
Conservation and Management Operations (Coral Reef Protection)	\$5.0
Procurement, Acquisition, and Construction Account	
(National Estuarine Research Reserve System)	\$2.0
Other Accounts	
(Coastal Impact Assistance Fund)	\$100.0
(Pacific Salmon Fund)	\$42.0
Lands Legacy Total New Funding	\$265.8

Why Protecting Our Estuaries is Important

From the bountiful tidal creeks and productive wetlands of the Chesapeake Bay, to the mangrove forests of coastal Florida, to the mud flats and seagrass meadows of Washington state, our nation has been richly endowed with dynamic and thriving estuaries. These special coastal places provide habitat for many important species, act as nature's water treatment system, provide flood control and protection against storm damage, and are wonderful recreational areas. Despite their importance, these natural systems are in trouble. Estuaries are suffering from water quality problems, habitat loss, and declining habitat quality. Polluted runoff from farms and coastal development, harmful algal blooms, freshwater diversions, non-indigenous species invasions, and declining fish and wildlife abundance and diversity are some of the problems plaguing our estuaries. The National Estuarine Research Reserve System represents protected areas where we can better understand these problems and forge solutions with community partners. Reserves exist in: Alabama, Alaska, California, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New York, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Washington, and Puerto Rico. The two in development are in California and New York.

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Responding to the Problem

The reserve system was established to protect key coastal areas for scientific study, education, and resource stewardship. This initiative will help states better protect and manage the more than one million acres of lands and waters in reserves, as well as strengthen the system through cooperative efforts with coastal communities and nonprofit organizations. NOAA will provide national leadership in the sustainable use of our estuaries by providing core state staff at every site, updating ecological profiles at each reserve, and implementing additional monitoring to monitor of estuary health at each site. Graduate fellowships and improved training for those who make decisions that affect coastal resources will also help in the protection of these fragile resources.

Reserves have identified habitat in critical need of acquisition for resource protection and for long-term science, education, and demonstration programs. Specifically, \$2.0 million of the increase will support state and community acquisition of forests and wetlands that help buffer reserve resources from the impacts of development. Examples of priority acquisitions for the reserve system include: wetlands on St. George Island at Apalachicola, Florida; the Hither Island Sedge complex and scattered pockets of marsh at Jacques Cousteau at Mullica River, New Jersey; wetlands, seasonal grasses, and upland buffer at Elkhorn Slough, California; critical estuarine habitat at Weeks Bay, Alabama; and Dyer Island at Narragansett, Rhode Island.

Facilities and related structures, such as interpretive centers, laboratories, boardwalks, and boat docks, are essential for carrying out these programs. These funds are needed for facility construction at three new reserves at Grand Bay, Mississippi, Guana Tolomato Matanzas, Florida, and Kachemak Bay, Alaska. Examples of other priority projects at existing reserves include: completing interpretive facilities at ACE Basin, South Carolina; constructing the Hudson River Center-Norrie



Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.



Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Point at Hudson River, New York; and constructing a research dormitory at Old Woman Creek, Ohio.

Why NOAA?

NOAA is the Federal partner in the Reserve System, as mandated in the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972. As such:

- NOAA provides guidance and matching funds to states for land acquisition, construction, resource protection, research, and education and states operate and manage the sites.
- In consultation with state and local partners at each Reserve, NOAA helps set priorities for land acquisition, construction, and management such that the whole Reserve System will benefit.
- Through NOAA's leadership in shaping system-wide programs in monitoring, applied research, and education, the value of the whole Reserve System is greater than the sum of the individual Reserve activities.
- NOAA helps ensure that the actions taken under this initiative are linked to and coordinated with state Coastal Management Programs.
- NOAA brings the full range of capabilities in resource management, research, assessment, and education to the important job of protecting the Nation's estuaries.

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